

**Bethany ‘Time Out’ Devotional – November 15, 2020**

By Pastor Andrew Harootian

**Read this Devotional.**

I’ll never forget a story that one of my old seminary professors shared that is a good metaphor for what Sabbath is. Supposedly, a man finds a neat looking bowl at a yard sale one day and buys it for a few bucks. Months later, through all of the appropriate channels, he comes to learn that this bowl is in fact a rare and exquisite ancient Chinese artifact from the Ming Dynasty. The bowl was the only one of its kind to be in existence as far as anyone knew and its value turned out to be a few million dollars! Similarly, it is helpful to for us to think about the Sabbath this way: a seemingly old or outdated law from Scripture which turns out might just be priceless in value if put into practice now…

When considering ways that we might practice Sabbath rest unto the Lord, words like ceasing, resting, celebrating, feasting, and embracing are helpful to keep in mind. We cease from work. We rest in God’s presence. We celebrate God’s blessings in our lives like family or friends. We feast on good food, good company, or a life-giving activity. And we embrace things like peace, our calling, our limits, and time itself.

2 Corinthians 9:8-11 says, “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency (or ‘all contentment’) in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.”

I don’t know about you, but when it comes to being content all of the time I’m not there yet! One thing that God often needs to remind me during Sabbath rest is that He is enough—more than enough in fact! I confess that there are times that I struggle with having a mindset of scarcity rather than abundance. I think, “There won’t be enough (money, resources, provision, time, etc.) and so what happens is that mindset can stifle my capacity for generosity and truly being in the present moment.

It turns out that practicing Sabbath rest unto God can aid us in being more generous with our time and resources. Two practices that Elyssa and I cease from during Sabbath are 1) not buying things and 2) not going on social media. These two practices help train (or re-train) our minds to know the God who gives generously and will supply all of our needs as well as to know that we do not need to be on social media to be enriched, but can instead be enriched by God’s grace through our present circumstances and what we already have.

**Discuss these questions/ideas together (10-30 min)**

* Is not buying anything or not going on social media something that you see yourself doing on Sabbath?
* In what ways do you have a mindset of scarcity? In what ways do you think in terms of abundance?
* What practice might you want to do during Sabbath? What might be something to cease on Sabbath that could be beneficial to your walk with God?

Pray that God would re-form our perspectives of ourselves, the world, and how we interact with it. Ask God to give us generous hearts and an abundant perspective.

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If you are interested in learning more about Sabbath, I encourage you to check out any of the following good, accessible book resources:

*Keeping the Sabbath Wholly* by Marva Dawn

*The Sabbath Experiment* by Rob Muthiah

*Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in our Busy Lives* by Wayne Muller